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The President's Address and Report

Florida Historical Society
membership@myfloridahistory.org



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THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS AND REPORT

*To the Members of the Florida Historical Society
and Guests:*

This Society was first organized in 1856, reorganized in 1902, incorporated on May 15, 1905, and is today celebrating its eightieth birthday since its first organization and its thirty-fourth annual meeting since its reorganization. When we all reach the advanced age of eighty, here's hoping that if we cannot all be going strong, at least most of us may be getting by.

Somewhere in the Bible there is something about "the wind being tempered to the shorn lamb." The members of the Society must have had this in mind when they elected your President at the last annual meeting. They were good enough to safeguard him with fellow officers of ability, equipped with knowledge of the affairs of the Society, of industrious habits and of good dispositions. Any and all accomplishments during the past year are due to their splendid cooperation. Your President is under special obligations to one of your members, for many years one of the Directors and Vice-President, possessing a great knowledge of Florida history and a wide acquaintance throughout the State with worthwhile people, namely Professor A. J. Hanna. He assisted in planning and engineering meetings throughout the State to carry out the policies of the Society to make people history-conscious.

On January 12 your President attended, upon invitation, a meeting of the Tallahassee Historical Society to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of Florida's secession from the Federal Union. The first regional meeting sponsored by the Society

was held in Sanford, the Fifth District, February 8, presided over by Senator A. M. Taylor. Two were held in the First District, the first at Mountain Lake on March 12, with Senator S. L. Holland presiding, and the second in Tampa on April 20, with George P. Raney, chairman. On October 31 a meeting was held at Coral Gables under the auspices of the University of Miami, with the Honorable J. P. Stokes presiding. Today's meeting is a combination of the one planned for the Second District with the Annual Meeting, and will complete the Society's activities for the year. We are indebted to Mrs. Roy V. Ott for making all arrangements for today's meeting in such a careful and painstaking manner.

Your President was laid up for repairs and unable to attend the Tampa meeting; and on the day of the Miami meeting the funeral services were held for our Librarian and Corresponding Secretary, Carl Bohnenberger, whose tragic death caused an irreparable loss to his family, this Society, and the profession he so greatly honored. Suitable resolutions in his memory will be offered and passed here.

During the past year your Directors held two meetings—one in December, 1935, and one on April 25, 1936. Upon invitation, Doctor James A. Robertson, Executive Secretary of the Florida State Historical Society, and Professor Hanna sat with us at the latter meeting. The first report of the Committee on the Revision of the Charter and By-Laws, the appointment of which was authorized by the Directors at the first meeting, was offered and approved. The adoption of its report today will be a step forward. In June, Second Vice-President Doctor Kathryn T. Abbey accepted Chairmanship of the Committee for the Collection, Use and Preservation of Manuscripts, and was instrumental in acquiring the papers of Richard Keith Call, Second

Territorial Governor of Florida. Funds to finance the purchase were provided thru the efforts of Professor Hanna and others.

Among the notable contributions of historical data to the Society are some manuscripts and old newspapers from Honorable D. B. McKay of Tampa. Your Treasurer, Albert H. Roberts, acting upon his own initiative, is negotiating to acquire for the Society the correspondence and documents of the late senators Duncan U. Fletcher and Park Trammell.

At the April meeting of the Directors your President was authorized to accept an invitation extended by the Mayor of St. Augustine (Honorable Walter B. Fraser) to become a member of a committee to plan a restoration of all or a portion of the original city within the old wall. Your president was unable to attend the meeting of this committee, in Washington, D. C., October 26. Doctor J. C. Merriam, of the Carnegie Institution, was secured as chairman of a committee of which Doctor Tigert is a member. St. Augustine has pledged funds for preliminary surveys and excavations upon which to base a report ready in March. In the meanwhile the Society can join in the views of Doctor Merriam contained in a letter to Mr. Fraser under date of October 31, 1936; quote:

I am much interested in what can be done to work out a sound program for study of St. Augustine and a plan for protection and use of its historical values such as would commend itself to the thinking people of the country. It will require careful thought and considerable painstaking work, but if this can be done on the basis of accurate investigation, a work of importance can be accomplished.

At the April meeting of the directors it was decided to make an organized campaign for new members, and a committee was appointed with Watt Marchman as chairman. Thru his efforts the membership of the Society has been increased so that it is now up to very nearly the high-water-mark of all time.

Members of the Society must be aware of the splendid work done by its First Vice-President, Julien C. Yonge, Editor of the *Quarterly*, which comes to us so regularly and is so full of valuable historical data.

In closing his report, your President recommends for consideration during the coming year the following objectives:

1. Reappointment of the Membership Committee.
2. Appointment of a Finance and Budget Committee.
3. Cataloging and indexing the library and Call papers.
4. Carrying on regional meetings in the five congressional districts, and putting forth every effort to make the people of the State not only history but archive conscious.

May the Society continue to go forward, avoiding partisan entanglements, and have for its objects the teaching of reverent regard for the names, history and character of the founders of Florida; to inculcate patriotism in their descendants; to discover, preserve, and collect records relating to the first settlers, their ancestors, and descendants; and to commemorate important events in the history of Florida and the Republic.

Respectfully submitted,

JOSHUA C. CHASE, President.

REPORT OF THE MEMBERSHIP C O M M I T T E E

November 17 1936

Whatever success the Chairman of the Membership Committee is able to report to the members of the Florida Historical Society has been due almost entirely to the combined efforts of its members, namely, Mrs. T. M. McDuffee, Manatee; Hon. G. P. McCord, Tallahassee; Mr. Philip S. May, Jacksonville, and Dr. R. L. Goulding, Fort Lauderdale. Without, however, the full cooperation and advice of President Joshua C. Chase and the Directors of the Society, and with the assistance and encouragement of many members, the Committee would not have been able to function with any degree of success.

Following the appointment of the Committee in April, 1936, a determined effort was made to secure the names and addresses of everyone in Florida and in the United States who had an interest in the history and colorful background of Florida, who would appreciate being nominated for membership in the Society. Over one thousand specially written letters of invitation, accompanied by application blanks bearing the name of the person nominating the prospective member, were sent to a carefully selected list of names. The results in new members have been gratifying; and with the addition of a few more members, the Society will have the maximum membership in the eighty years of its history.

At the present time the total membership of the Society is safely over five hundred. At the annual meeting last November, there was a total of three hundred twenty-one members, of which two were honorary and four life members. During the year we have lost four by withdrawals and seven by death,

including one honorary, Senator Duncan U. Fletcher, and one director, Carl Bohnenberger. Now we have one honorary, four life members and over five hundred contributing and active members.

The Membership Committee feels that the increase of the members of the Society and the interest which is being taken in the Society's program over the state, has really just started; and that, at some not too distant day the present membership shall be doubled.

Respectfully submitted,

WATT MARCHMAN, Chairman.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

November 17, 1936.

*To the President and Members of
The Florida Historical Society:*

I have the honor of submitting herewith my first annual report as Treasurer of the Society.

On November 19, 1935, my honored predecessor, Mr. T. Frederick Davis, turned over to me a check for \$222.04, representing the balance to the Society's credit in Florida National Bank, Jacksonville, together with a number of membership fees which had not been passed to the Bank account. Total receipts for the year, including bank balance and items turned over to me by Mr. Davis, have amounted to \$1,581.04, total disbursements \$1,390.15, balance at close of business November 16, 1936 (exclusive of checks aggregating some \$15.00 to \$20.00) of \$190.89.

As a matter of convenience, I transferred the Society's deposit to a Tallahassee bank, and details of the transactions with this bank appear in the attached statement.

As stated, the old bank balance turned over to me by the retiring Treasurer was \$222.04. Receipts for the year on account of purchase of the Governor R. K. Call papers were \$514.00; receipts from ordinary sources (memberships), \$845.00; total bank deposits \$1,581.04. The publication of the four issues of the Florida Historical Society Quarterly for 1936 (January, April, July and October), all paid for, constituted the principal expense. For the purchase of the Call papers, the Society paid \$500.00. Minor expenses include postage, miscellaneous printing, and supplies. Both postage and miscellaneous printing expenses have been somewhat higher than usual by reason of the active campaign for the purchase of the Call documents, and the active campaign of the Membership Committee for new members, both of these campaigns achieving signal success.

I wish to express to the President, other officers and directors, and to the membership, my sincere appreciation of your co-operation during the year, and of your more than generous forbearance with the difficulties that have made it impossible for me to handle the numerous details of the office as efficiently as I could have wished, and as you had every right to expect from one accepting the responsibilities of the office.

Respectfully submitted,

ALBERT H. ROBERTS, Treasurer.